

A NOTE FROM FATHER EICKHOFF

Sometimes it helps to flip the Holy Scriptures around in order to better understand them. Now by this I do not mean that you should take your Holy Bible and turn it around and try to read it upside down. If you can do that, I will be very impressed. Or very disturbed. No, I mean that we should take a passage of Scripture such as today's Second Reading from St. Paul's Letter to the Corinthians and flip it around.

Consider the following example. In today's Second Reading St. Paul tells the Corinthians that:

"Not many of you were wise by human standards, not many were powerful, not many were of noble birth."

Now let us flip it around by changing the tense from the past to the present so that it reads:

Now you are wise, now you are powerful, now you are of noble birth.

In what ways can the followers of Christ be considered wise, powerful, and of noble birth?

Certainly, the followers of Jesus Christ can be considered wise by virtue of being joined to the very person of God through the Sacrament of Baptism. God, who is the very source of wisdom, shares not only His grace, and His life with us, but He also shares with us His wisdom. There can be no higher wisdom in all of creation than what God has so generously made known to us by virtue of being brothers and sisters of Jesus Christ.

Or consider how the follower of Christ is powerful. Before becoming followers of Christ every human being was subjected to the baleful influence of sin and the power of the evil one. We were weak not only in terms of human societies, but in every other way such as spiritual, behavioral, and mental. However, after becoming a disciple of Jesus Christ we have through Jesus gained power over sin and the evil one. We no longer must be subjected to these forces. Rather, we can triumph over them. The Christian is powerful in a way that goes well beyond what is visibly seen in human societies for the Christian can be victorious over sins and vices that utterly dominate those persons who are called "powerful" in human society.

Finally, let us consider how we might be of noble birth. Through Baptism we become sons and daughters of God. Once again, there is no one greater than God. If we are truly children of God, then we are also of the highest possible noble birth. Now, I will grant you that there are few people in the United States today who expect to be called "Lord so and so" or "Princess whoever" (that is unless you run into some member of the British royal family) and so you might think that this is unimportant nowadays. However, there are people who have prestige and opportunities given to them solely based on who their parents are. Look at the children of just about any politician if you need an example. To be of noble birth through Jesus Christ is to stress how this nobility is not limited to just a few, but rather to everyone who belongs to the family of God.

Yours in Christ,

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